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Ref. A03524

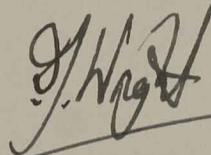
MR. LANKESTER

Civil Service Manpower Reductions: Departmental Targets

The Lord President minuted the Prime Minister on 7th November proposing to announce by Written Answer at the end of this week the firm Departmental targets for the number of civil servants to be in post at 1st April 1984.

2. I recommend that the Prime Minister should support this. The Answer when it appears is likely to lead to individual Ministers being pressed about how they propose to achieve their targets and their replies will no doubt be scrutinised carefully by the House and also by Civil Service unions. But this sort of pressure on Departments should help to ensure that they are kept up to the mark over their targets.

3. We have no comments on the terms of the Lord President's draft Answer. It is, however, for consideration whether all the targets for staff in post should be rounded to the nearest appropriate 10, 25 or 50. Figures of, for instance, 16,006 for the Lord Chancellor's Department or 9,084 for the Lord President's Departments have a spurious air of precision and look curious set against a figure of 200,000 for the Ministry of Defence or 49,000 for the Employment group. In addition, since the draft Answer refers to the Contingency Reserve, it would be preferable to include specific mention of this in the list of Departmental targets and to make the overall Civil Service target in the list 630,000 (the figure mentioned in the draft Answer) rather than 615,000.



D.J. WRIGHT

11th November, 1980

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

TO: THE SECRETARY OF STATE

FROM: [Illegible]

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

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THOMAS J. WRIGHT

11/19/80